



PSS/ ENVS 156: Permaculture Design Course

Syllabus

D Acres Educational Homestead, Dorchester, NH

Rock Point, Burlington, VT

March 9-13, April 4-5, and 11-12, 2009

Instructors:

Claude Genest	(802)-928-3648	claudio@claudiolegenest.com
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Required Text:

Introduction to Permaculture

Mollison, Bill with Reny Mia Slay. (2nd Edition).

Tagari Publications, Tyalgum, Australia. 1997.

Recommended Texts:

Edible Forest Gardens

Jacke, Dave with Eric Toensmeier. (Volumes 1 & 2).

Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability. Holmgren, David.

The Transition Handbook. Hopkins, Rob.

Toolbox for Sustainable City Living. Kellogg and Pettigrew.

Field Guides:

Peterson's: 'Edible Wild Plants', 'Medicinal Plants & Herbs',
'Eastern Forests',

Newcomb's "Wildflower Guide"

The Nature of Vermont

Johnson, Charles.

Wetland, Woodland, Wildland

Thompson, E. H., and E. R. Sorenson.

(Or field guides appropriate to your home or area of focus.)

Any Other Permaculture Texts:

"Gaia's Garden", "A Designer's Manual", "Food not Lawns!", etc.

*Please email Keith for an educational discount on most books.

Required Materials (There will be some materials on site):

Tracing Paper (a roll or large pad)

Coloring Medium of your choice (Pencils, Markers, Watercolor, etc.)

Three Ring Binder

Engineer's Scale (3 sided ruler- not an "architect's scale")

Compass (*both* the circle drawing kind & a magnetic compass)

50' or 100' (or longer) Tape Measure

Any other drafting tools you may have (circle templates, erasers,
protractor, lead holders, pens, triangles, etc.)

Course Description:

Permaculture is the study and practice of the way human beings- as individuals and societies- can participate in the creation of ethical and ecological support systems. We present a whole systems design approach that integrates plants, animals, buildings, people, communities, and the landscapes that surround us. The course is designed to introduce students to the **principles** and **practice** of permaculture design through collaboration on real-world projects with an eye towards repairing, restoring and regenerating human ecosystems.

Course Objectives:

We focus on permaculture as a framework for understanding, evaluating, and integrating the vast diversity of technologies, trends, and different perspectives in the movement for “sustainability”, and advance permaculture ethics and skills as a **new cultural paradigm**.

Students demonstrate:

- the vision and ability to implement solutions on a personal level to the unsustainable, destructive, and exploitative tendencies of dominant culture.
- the ability to interpret a landscape and its ecological implications.
- effective communication of these interpretations through maps, graphical analysis and assessment, and group presentations.
- understanding of key ecological design strategies for systems of varying scale.
- discovery and development of *relationships between* elements, goals, and site realities.
- proficiency with design methods and techniques, observation, pattern recognition, and systems understanding.
- permaculture **principles** and **ethics**.

*Of course: we have fun, get to know each other, and share encouragement and inspiration!

Course Format:

The course takes place as a one week Permaculture Design Intensive (March 9-13), followed by three weeks off-site, then two consecutive weekends (April 4-5 and 11-12), with a week off-site between. The course consists of facilitating a collaborative design by the students as a group, and culminates with students presenting their own designs for a site of their choosing.

March 9-13: D Acres, Dorchester, NH Permaculture Design Intensive

The core of the course is a 1 week design intensive which include lectures, guest speakers, field trips, hands-on design and implementation, group and individual presentations, readings, individual assignments, and other activities. We introduce permaculture ethics, principles, the design process, site analysis and assessment, and a variety of permaculture solutions while facilitating collaborative designs by student in groups. Collectively, the group refines designs for the next phase of real-world implementation at our host site D Acres (www.dacres.org).

March 13- April 12: Personal Project

Students will then apply the design process to their homes or any site of their choosing. The course culminates with the presentation of these individual student design projects.

Students are to choose a site to develop their own in-depth permaculture design. A site which you are either **intimately familiar with** or **able to spend time analyzing** during the course is recommended (present home, parents home, dorm and courtyard, friends', neighborhood lot, etc.), but we are open to what best meets your learning goals. **If you do not have a site**, there are numerous opportunities for design in the nearby community- instructors will assist with the selection of sites appropriate to your needs.

If you already have a site for which you would like to design, any of the following information you can find will prove extremely useful:

Property Maps or Surveys: Deed maps showing property lines, buildings, rights of way (R.O.W.), buried gas, sewer, water, electric, phone, etc. These are typically on record in the **town hall**.

Aerial photographs: If you are near a city, Google Maps, will have frighteningly detailed pictures of your site. For more rural areas, www.terraserver.com has high resolution images, that you will have to purchase before you can see. The best aerial photographs of your site are available at a local **university library map room**, or your county's **USDA office**. You may be able to find additional GIS data online.

Soil Maps: Your local **USDA office** will have a free copy of your county's soil survey for you. If you have the results from any soil tests you've done yourself or by a septic engineer, bring them along. Soil maps are now available for the entire country online- we will help you to access this information.

Personal Project (continued):

Photographs: Photos of your yard, house, or proposed site. If you're able to take some, keep in mind your favorite views (to and from), things that cast shadows, features on the ground (stones, etc.), surrounding vegetation, 'problem areas', etc.

Finally: Begin spending some time thinking about your **goals**, 'problems', and other **challenges or opportunities** inherent to your site.

March 14- April 3: Personal Project: Goals Articulation, A & A, Design Concepts

Students are to spend these weeks working on their individual final projects generating in-depth **Goals Articulation**, a **Base Map**, and **Analysis & Assessment** data overlay (through the 'Scale of Permanence'). From goals and analysis, students develop **design concepts** and **presentation drawings** to an appropriate level of detail for their project. At the end of the course, students will each present their **Final Design Project** to the group and will receive constructive feedback from a 'jury' of other permaculture designers.

April 4-5: D Acres, Dorchester, NH Design Charrette

Students return to D Acres for a hands-on intensive design session weekend. Each will introduce their final project site to the group, present their goals and challenges, and we will collectively spend the weekend working through design problems with the resource materials on site, the assistance of peers, and the instructor team's support and guidance. Lectures and screenings will be focused on preparation for Final Presentations.

April 6-10: Personal Project: Design Completion

Students will develop design concepts into presentation drawings, and begin an appropriate level of Detailed Design and Implementation (Phase) Design. Students will meet at Rock Point ready to present their completed Final Project Designs.

April 11-12: Rock Point, Burlington, VT**Design Presentations and Closing Celebrations****Final Presentations are Saturday April 11.**

Design 'clients', housemates, friends, family, or other guests are welcome to attend **Final Design Presentations**. The Final Project will be discussed in greater depth during the course and with specific handouts. Designs will be evaluated by the instructor team, and constructive feedback will be provided by a 'jury' of area permaculture designers. This weekend will also include closing celebrations and "Where do we go from here?" discussions.

Assessment:

Grades and standards established by the University of Vermont will be used in this course. Staff will grade participants considering:

- Base level sufficiency of skills and knowledge.
- Growth in skills, knowledge, and mindset.
- Group interaction, leadership, and self-directed learning ability.
- Meeting stated **Course Objectives**.

Attendance and engagement with all required sessions and activities: (35%)

Communication skills, listening, writing, positive contribution to group activities

Community interaction and participation

Attendance is mandatory for all sessions!

Creative, energetic, and thorough Design: (15%)

Design methods, techniques, patterns and processes, ecosystem integration

Base mapping, site analysis and assessment, site design, Group Design

Final Independent Design Project: (25%)

-Presentation:

Clear goals articulation. Demonstration of permaculture principles and ethics

-Design

Site Analysis and Assessment: grounding of design solutions in site realities.

Ability of graphics to communicate information about site and designer's vision.

-Fun, imagination, creativity, unique vision and interpretation of possibilities

Desired Species Niche Analysis (15%)**Reflective Journaling: (10%)**

Daily reflection on impact and perspectives during the course and design process

*This Syllabus is subject to change slightly before the course based on student learning goals, instructor team collaboration, weather, and other factors.

If you have any questions regarding registration or logistical issues, please contact

Deborah Neher: (802)-656-0474 dneher@uvm.edu

For questions, concerns, or any special needs for lodging or meals, please contact Keith Morris, or our hosts:

D Acres: (603) 786-2366 info@dacres.org www.dacres.org

Bishop Booth Conference Center: (802) 658-6233 bishopbooth@dioceseofvermont.org
<http://www.dioceseofvermont.org/Orgs/BishopBooth.html>

Any questions regarding content of the course, site selection for the design project, readings, materials, etc. can be directed to

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